



Living Healthy,
Working Well

Wellness Tips

Calming Fear through Self-Education

The media is in overdrive since the terrorist attacks in September. Americans and people around the world have been glued to their televisions and/or radios to hear updates, debates, and news surrounding past events and future actions. It is important for individuals to take responsibility for self-education during these times of fact and rumor. If we are not careful, our own anxiety could put us at risk.

Speculation & Anxiety

Speculation can cloud reality. Just because someone suspects something may happen does not prove its validity. Reflect for a moment on the frenzy surrounding Y2K. There was speculation that non-compliant computers would stop functioning or would go haywire. But in the end, there was very little, if any disruption to our lives. Remaining calm and sensible will help keep the current situation in perspective. It is smart to take basic steps to prepare and to educate yourself before acting on everything you hear or read.

Source Confirmation

News organizations usually attempt to confirm sources. Occasionally, their reports are either inaccurate or are simply incorrect. This means you need to take responsibility for the information you regard as truth by confirming its source or validity. This can be done in a few ways:

- If the report was given via television or radio, switch to another news station to see if the same story is being broadcast.
- Check legitimate online news sites to confirm reports, including the Associated Press.
- Read between the lines and don't make assumptions. Sometimes conclusions are drawn by newscasters or by viewers. Pay attention to the details. If something isn't explicitly stated, then its implication may be false.
- Other trustworthy sources for confirmation are government agencies. For example, for information regarding threats of bio-chemical warfare, check with the Center of Disease Control at www.cdc.gov.

Be Prepared, Not Scared

As the Office of Homeland Security works to ensure safety for all citizens, we must take steps as individuals to be alert and cautious. Be aware of your surroundings. Take this opportunity to create an Emergency Supplies Kit, to store food, water, first aid items, batteries, etc. This is a good investment for any unforeseen disasters, whether natural or otherwise. Also, come up with an emergency plan for your family. Through preparedness, you will calm your anxiety about "what would I do if something terrible happened?" You will answer this question with your emergency plan and supplies kit.

Call Your EAP

If you or someone you care about needs help to overcome anxiety, you may wish to contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP counselors are available 24 hours a day, every day of the week, to provide confidential assistance at no cost to you. Information, self-help tools, and other resources are also available online at www.MagellanAssist.com.

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